



**JERRY SANDERS**  
MAYOR

May 11, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: Mt. Soledad National War Memorial

Dear President Bush:

I want to reinforce the importance of the Mt. Soledad National War Memorial to the citizens of San Diego. This nationally registered War Memorial has been caught up in a long series of court actions that threaten its future. A recent California State Court action has questioned the validity of our City's transfer of the Memorial to the National Park Service. Additionally, a Federal District Court has ordered that an important element of the Memorial, a cross, be taken down within 90 days.


Last night, Congressman Duncan Hunter wrote you recommending that the Federal Government take the property on which the Memorial is located by eminent domain. I commend Congressman Hunter for doing everything possible to preserve the integrity of this important shrine to our fallen soldiers and support the Congressman's recommendation.

The Mt. Soledad National War Memorial is a Federally registered, multi-faceted national war memorial that recognizes veterans of all wars and of all faiths. San Diego is the home of the largest concentration of active duty and retired military service members in the country. Our region has a proud history of paying tribute to our fallen soldiers. This particular memorial has been part of San Diego's landscape for more than 50 years.

I thought that it was very important to continue to make you aware of the facts and uncertain future of this important national memorial. The citizens of San Diego have repeatedly demonstrated their support for maintaining the memorial. It would be truly unfortunate to lose this sacred monument.

As always, I appreciate your consideration and support.

Sincerely,



**JERRY SANDERS**  
Mayor



U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0552

May 10, 2006

President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to request your urgent assistance. Since 1954, the Mt. Soledad Memorial, honoring casualties and veterans of both World Wars and the Korean War, has stood atop Mount Soledad in San Diego California. Part of this Memorial is a graceful 29-foot cross that can be seen as a welcoming symbol to sailors as they return to their homeport at North Island, just outside the city.

Unfortunately, this beloved Memorial has been under siege by a single individual and his team of lawyers who have ignored the broader historical context and community support for the Memorial in order to make a political point. He has sued repeatedly to remove the Memorial's centerpiece cross due to its location on City of San Diego property. The City has taken every step possible to meet the court's demands, while still protecting the integrity of the Memorial. However, despite these efforts, liberal judges have continued to rely on their interpretation of the California State Constitution to justify the removal of this historic Memorial.

In order to protect the Memorial for future generations of veterans and San Diego visitors and residents, Congress passed and you signed into law a provision that designated the Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial as a national veterans memorial. Upon the City's donation of the land, the Secretary of Interior was tasked with accepting the Memorial and working with the local community to administer its upkeep. Sadly, the then-City Council voted against donating the property. The citizens of San Diego were outraged and quickly demanded a city-wide referendum on donating the property. An unprecedented 76% of San Diego residents voted to donate the land to the Department of Interior, only to have a California State judge declare the vote a violation of the State Constitution.

The residents of San Diego have clearly indicated their desire to adhere to the

legislative mandate and they need your help to comply. Please use the authority found in 40 U.S.C. 3113 to begin immediate condemnation proceedings and bring this national Veterans' Memorial into the federal park system. This matter deserves your urgent attention as a District Judge recently ruled that the Mt. Soledad Memorial Cross must be removed from City property within 90 days, or the City will face a daily fine of \$5,000.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter. It would be a national travesty to have this veterans' memorial dismantled against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of San Diego residents and federal legislative intent. I have enclosed a copy of the Mt. Soledad Memorial chronology and I look forward to working with you to save this national memorial.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Duncan Hunter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Duncan" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Hunter".

Duncan Hunter  
Member of Congress

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Jerry Sanders, Mayor of San Diego